

FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

07-289

Orleans

N

EAS.361

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Town/City: EASTHAM

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Campground Road Area

Photograph



Address: 30 Townsend Road

Historic Name: Harry Townsend House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

Date of Construction: ca. 1924

Source: Deed research, Eastham Tax Commitment Books

Style/Form: Bungalow

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Concrete block

Wall/Trim: Wood shingles/ Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Second house (2024, Photo 2) and large outbuilding/barn (2001, Photo 3)

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

None

Condition: Good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 1.0 acres

Setting: This property is located on the east side of Townsend Road and bordered on the north by Russell Avenue. The surrounding area includes early-20th century cottage lots, and the area is now built out with modest cottages and houses from the early-20th to the early-21st centuries on varying-sized lots. This house is centered on its fairly large parcel with outbuildings behind the house. The house is partially obscured by evergreen trees and shrubbery. A circular gravel driveway leads past the front of the house.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Eric Dray, Preservation Consultant, for

Organization: Eastham Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): April 2025

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

EASTHAM

30 TOWNSEND ROAD

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

This house is very similar in design to the house next store at 20 Russell Avenue (EAS.357), and both were built by the same person between 1923 and 1925. This is an intact example of an astylistic bungalow. The house is 1½-stories with a hip roof; there is a centered “doghouse” dormer on the front roof slope; and a broad porch is contained within the front roof slope. These features are all characteristic of bungalows. In addition to the main block, there are one-story ells on both side elevations. According to its Property Card, the house rests on a foundation of piers. This appears to be true at least below the front porch; it is unclear if other portions of the house also rest on piers or on stone or concrete block foundations. The elevations are clad in weathered wood shingles with plain cornerboards. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles and has projecting open eaves with exposed rafter tails. Unusual for many early-20th century Eastham cottages, this house retains wood, single-glazed, 6/6 windows that may be original or at least early. Mullioned examples of these windows enclose the front porch, and smaller mullioned examples are found in the front dormer, including on the side walls of the dormer. The centered front entrance on the porch has a multi-paned door set in a surround with full sidelights.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

This house has an Assessor date of 1900, but there is no house in this location on the 1910 Barnstable County Atlas. The Area Form for Campground Road (EAS.N) gives this house a construction date of ca. 1910 which may be accurate.

Incorporated as Nauset Plantation in 1646, and changed to Eastham in 1651, Eastham territory originally extended south to Pleasant Bay in Orleans and north beyond Wellfleet Harbor. The early development pattern for what we now know as Eastham was impacted by its absence of deep-water harbor facilities. Relatively fertile soil led to dispersed agricultural settlement, but residential and commercial development was concentrated to the north at Wellfleet Harbor and to the south at Town Cove and Pleasant Bay. When the separate towns of Wellfleet and Orleans were created in the late-18th century, Eastham became and remained one of the least populated towns on the Cape throughout the 19th century.

In the 19th century, Eastham was the agricultural center of the Outer Cape. Crops evolved over time; corn and dairy were surpassed in the early-20th century by asparagus and turnips - two crops well suited for the sandy soil. In 1900, 58% of Eastham's workers were employed as farmers, but by 1930 that number had dwindled to 21%. Summer resort development, including cottage colonies and subdivisions of former farmland that would transform Eastham, had begun in earnest in the 1920s as middle-class access to car ownership increased and Cape roads were improved.

This property is connected to the cottage development around Campground Road - one of the three earliest roads to extend west to Cape Cod Bay from the central sections of Eastham. Despite the early development of the road, which was established to serve the Methodist camp meetings in the mid-19th century, the great majority of houses that border it, especially to the north, are 20th-century vernacular summer cottages and retirement houses.

On the north side of Campground Road, Harry P. Townsend platted a large subdivision in 1929 on two parcels totaling 20 acres that he had purchased in 1923 from George Plummer of Lynn, MA (Fig. 2).¹ This acreage had originally been part of the land John Hopkins had owned on the north side of Campground Road. John Hopkins's widow, Diana, had sold the two parcels in 1889 to a

¹ Barnstable County Registry of Deeds, Book 390/ Page 545, Plan Book 51/ Page 85.

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Lynn salesman, Henry Marks, who in 1895 sold them to Plummer.² Plummer was a paper box manufacturer (likely for shoes, Lynn's principal industry). None of these deeds, including Townsend's purchase from Plummer in 1923, referenced buildings.

This house has an Assessor date of 1915, but that does not appear to be accurate. By the time Harry Townsend laid out his large subdivision in 1929, he was listed among six Eastham summer residents in the 1929 Cape Cod directory who owned property on Campground Road. That likely refers to this house. The early deeds for this house included Lot A but also the parcel labeled "Open Field" which stretched south the Campground Road. This would mean they built this house sometime between 1923 and 1929. The Eastham Tax Commitment Books at that time provide further clarity. The 1923 Tax Book is missing, but in the 1924 Tax Book he was assessed for one dwelling, likely this house, and in the 1925 Tax Book he was assessed for two dwellings plus a garage, likely indicating that he had just built the neighboring bungalow at 20 Russell Avenue (EAS.357).

Harry Pond Townsend (1875-1942) and his wife Margaret Emma (O'Brien) lived in Hartford, CT. Harry Townsend was an inventor who held 84 patents, and was credited with inventing the New Departure bicycle coaster brake which, according to his obituary, made the bicycle popular. He went on to found the H. P. Townsend Riveting Company which produced riveting, drill and screw machines for the "war industries." After his death, Margaret (1880-1952) ran the company for a time. She was also an active philanthropist who gave the land and funded the construction of the Church of St. Joan of Arc in Orleans. According to the Area Form for Campground Road (EAS.N), they also built the house at 20 Russell Avenue for their daughter. They did build that house, but they did not have any children.

In 1945, a widowed Margaret Townsend sold this property to the Raymond Realty Corporation, based in Nashua, NH.³ In 1959, this property was sold to Eleanor M. Cavey of Falls Church, VA, and in 1964 she was living in Carmody Hills, MD when she sold it to Thelma M. and William C. Clarke, Jr. of Cornwall Bridge, CT.⁴ In 1985, the Clarkes sold it to Joyce and Geoffrey Guild of Norton, MA.⁵ They appear to have divorced, and this house passed into a trust controlled by Geoffrey Guild. In 2022, he sold it to a trust controlled by Christian Termyn and Amy Lehrburger of San Francisco, CA.⁶

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www.ancestry.com - Vital records.

² Book 185/ Page 130, Book 390/ Page 545.

³ Book 631/ Page 391, 393.

⁴ Book 1056/ Page 89, Book 1284/ Page 1022.

⁵ Book 4753/ Page 84.

⁶ Book 34831/ Page 237.

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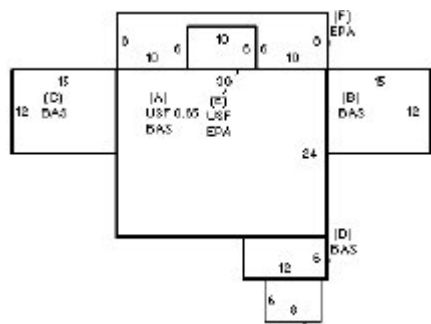


Figure 1. Assessor Sketch.



Photo 2. View of 2nd house, looking south.



Photo 3. View of barn/outbuilding, looking east.